and half years have improved the relative profitability of agriculture. Government's resolve to improve the economic viability and well-being of small farmers is reflected in higher public sector outlays for agriculture & allied activities which is the main source of public sector investments, substantial increase in farm credit, vigorous extension support including involvement of non-governmental organisations as also reduction in controls on domestic and foreign trade in agriculture. These measures are intended to create more employment opportunities in agriculture and help the farmers including the small farmers. The Government has accorded the highest priority for employment generation in its economic reforms by enhancing Central Plan allocations for social sectors and poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes.

Master plan of Action in States for elimination of child labour

5151. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) in which states master plan of action for elimination of child labour has been drawn up;

(b) if so, any specified time has been framed by the states to achieve the objective; and

(c) what are the details?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Child labour in Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu and other parts of the country

5152. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what was the estimated number of child labour engaged in (i) matches and fire works factories in Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu; (ii) the glass and glass bangle factories in Ferozabad; (iii) carpet and sari embroidery factories in Varanasi and Mirzapur and (iv) other hazardous jobs as on the eve of the declaration of the Prime Ministers action plan to abolish child labour from hazardous jobs;

(b) how far such child labourers have since been freed from hazardous jobs area-wise and how many of them have been resettled in alternate jobs or sent for training or education; and

(c) what further effective steps are contemplated in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) It is estimated that 20 lakhs children are engaged in hazarous occupations. Separate industry-wise figures of children engaged in different hazardous occupations is not maintained.

(b) and (c) National Authority for the Elimination of Child Labour (NAECL) has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Union Labour Minister to tackle the problem of child labour. The NAECL has adopted a plan of action titled 'Identification'. Release and Rehabilitation of Child Labour' to tackle the problem of child labour in the country. Briefly, it calls for a convergence of services and schemes of the Central and State Governments at the implementing level—the District—to effectively handle the identification and rehabilitation of child labour, the economic rehabilitation of the family with child labour and stricter enforcement of relevant laws. This plan of action has been sent to all States/UTs for adopting. Government is presently engaged in the process of preparing a major action plan